

Applicant: Robert S. Howland
Appl. No.: 10/698,087
Examiner: Eduardo C. Robert
Docket No.: 703716.4001

Amendments to the Claims

1. (cancelled)
2. (cancelled)
3. (original) The spinal fixation system of Claim 1 wherein the first and second clamp assemblies each comprise upper and lower clamp portions defining the respective passages therebetween.
4. (cancelled)
5. (original) The spinal fixation system of Claim 1 wherein each swing bolt comprises a threaded region opposite the respective first and second screws, and wherein a fastener is threadable onto the threaded region for securing the respective clamp assemblies on the swing bolts.
6. (currently amended) The spinal fixation system of Claim 4 12 wherein the spacer comprises a "C" shaped clip receivable around the elongate member, the clip comprising opposing edges that may be compressed around the elongate member to secure the clip to the elongate member.
7. (original) The spinal fixation system of Claim 1 wherein the elongate member is at least partially curved, and the passageways in the first and second clamp assemblies are configured for receiving the elongate member.
8. (cancelled)
9. (currently amended) A kit for stabilizing vertebrae relative to one another, comprising
 - one ~~one~~ or more substantially rigid rods,
 - a plurality of anchor screw assemblies, the anchor screw assemblies comprising anchor screws and a plurality of clamp assemblies for receiving the one

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or more rods therein, the anchor screw assemblies each including a screw configured to be screwed into a vertebrae and including a cylindrical swing bolt pivoted onto the first screw, and

a plurality of "C" shaped spacers having a plurality of lengths, the spacers comprising opposing edges defining a pocket therebetween for receiving the one or more rods therein.

10. (original) The kit of Claim 9 further comprising a crimping tool for crimping at least a portion of the opposing edges of the spacers around the one or more rods to secure the spacers to the rods.

11. (original) The kit of Claim 9 wherein each screw comprises a head portion opposite a threaded portion and wherein the head portion comprises a spherical shoulder, the spherical shoulder being adapted to mate, pivot and rotate with respect to a respective clamp assembly.

12. (new) A spinal fixation system comprising
a first anchor screw assembly having a first screw having a threaded portion configured to be screwed into a first vertebrae, the first screw assembly including a first cylindrical swing bolt pivoted onto the first screw, and the first screw assembly comprising a first clamp assembly having a cylindrical opening disposed on the first swing bolt of the first screw assembly, the first clamp assembly having a first passage therethrough,

a second anchor screw assembly comprising a second screw having a threaded portion configured to be screwed into a second vertebrae adjacent the first vertebrae, the second screw assembly including a second cylindrical swing bolt pivoted onto the second screw, and the second anchor screw assembly comprising a second clamp assembly having a cylindrical opening disposed on the second swing bolt of the second screw assembly, the second clamp assembly having a second passage therethrough,

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an elongate member receivable in the first and second passages, the elongate member comprising an exposed portion extending between the first and second screw assemblies, and

wherein each of the first and second screws comprises a head portion opposite the threaded portion comprising a spherical shoulder, the spherical shoulder being adapted to make, pivot and rotate with respect to the respective first and second clamp assemblies.

13. (new) A spinal fixation system comprising

a first anchor screw assembly having a first screw having a threaded portion configured to be screwed into a first vertebrae, the first screw assembly including a first cylindrical swing bolt pivoted onto the first screw, and the first screw assembly comprising a first clamp assembly having a cylindrical opening disposed on the first swing bolt of the first screw assembly, the first clamp assembly having a first passage therethrough,

a second anchor screw assembly comprising a second screw having a threaded portion configured to be screwed into a second vertebrae adjacent the first vertebrae, the second screw assembly including a second cylindrical swing bolt pivoted onto the second screw, and the second anchor screw assembly comprising a second clamp assembly having a cylindrical opening disposed on the second swing bolt of the second screw assembly, the second clamp assembly having a second passage therethrough,

an elongate member receivable in the first and second passages, the elongate member comprising an exposed portion extending between the first and second screw assemblies, and

a spacer securable to the exposed portion of the elongate member, the spacer having a length substantially similar to a length of the exposed portion of the elongate member for preventing the first and second anchor screw assemblies from moving substantially toward one another.

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14. (new) A spinal fixation system comprising
a first anchor screw assembly including a first screw having a threaded
portion configured to be screwed into a vertebrae,
a cylindrical swing bolt pivoted onto the first screw,
the anchor screw assembly further comprising a clamp assembly having a
cylindrical opening disposed on the swing bolt, and the clamp assembly including a
passageway therethrough for receiving an elongate member therein, and
wherein the first screw comprises a head portion opposite the threaded
portion comprising a spherical shoulder, the spherical shoulder being adapted to
make, pivot and rotate with respect to the clamp assembly.